

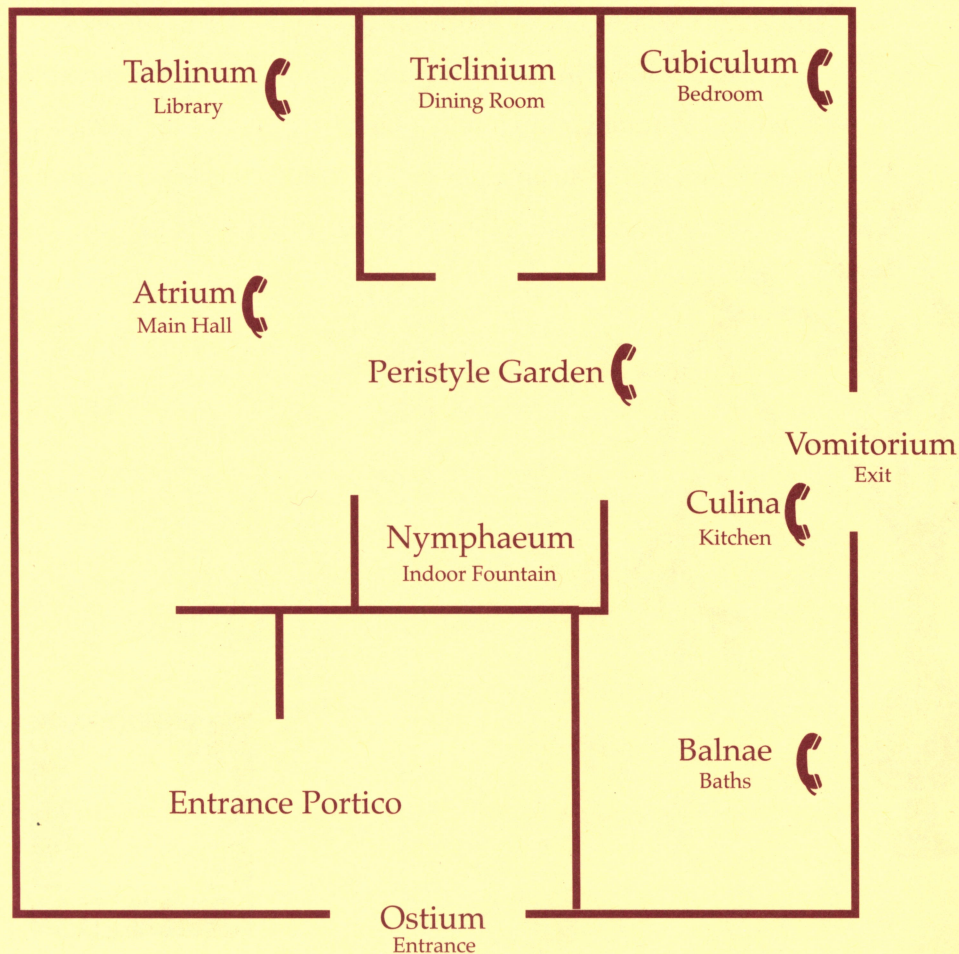
IN STABIANO

Exploring the Ancient Seaside Villas of the Roman Elite

Welcome to *In Stabiano*, an exhibition of 2,000-year-old Roman fresco paintings that have never before toured the United States. The exhibition consists of more than 70 works of art and artifacts recovered from five ancient Roman villas located in Stabiae, a resort community of lavish summer homes overlooking the Bay of Naples. The eruption of Mount Vesuvius in A.D. 79 buried Stabiae in ash and pumice, along with the nearby towns of Pompeii and Herculaneum. Although life in Stabiae was brought to an abrupt end, the luxurious living quarters and some treasures were remarkably preserved.



As you explore the exhibition, listen behind the scenes as the fictional family of Titus Flavius Sabinus prepares for a dinner party, much like the owners of the real villas represented in the exhibition might have. The Flavii Sabinii are having a special guest: the father of the *domina* (lady of the house)—who’s also one of the emperor’s sons. But in the spirit of Roman comedy, things don’t seem to be going as planned. Listen in on the telephones in several of the rooms.



Atrium (Main Hall)

Titus Flavius Sabinus, the *paterfamilias* (head of the family) would be a nice guy if he wasn’t so impressed with being the grandson-in-law of the emperor. He’s waiting in the atrium for Titus Flavius Vespasianus, the son of the emperor and his guest of honor. Instead, he has a visit from Stephanus, his client and former slave. Stephanus has a fishy business proposal that just can’t miss—this time for sure.

Tablinum (Library)

Quintus Flavius Sabinus is the young son of Sabinus and Flavia Julia. He will be reciting a poem for his grandpa this evening, so he must stay in the *tablinum* and practice, practice, practice. His sister, Flavia Prima is jealous that Quintus will go to the party and not her. She’s determined that Quintus will not practice, practice, practice.

Peristyle Garden

Flavia Prima is the young daughter of Sabinus and Flavia Julia. She’s unhappy that she isn’t going to the party, but thinks of a way to fly in with the help of a convenient peacock.

Cubiculum (Bedroom)

Flavia Julia is Sabinus’s wife and the emperor’s granddaughter. She wants to look nice for papa, but is in the *cubiculum* having a wardrobe malfunction. Her maid Apollonia is a little tense right now.

Culina (Kitchen)

Demetrius is the Greek cook who doesn’t sound very Greek. He’s in the *culina* looking for a wandering peacock that was supposed to be on the menu tonight. His helper is Felix, whose name means “lucky.” He’s not.

Balnae (Baths)

Titus Flavius Vespasianus—the guest of honor—has arrived early, hoping for a nice bath and a good meal. He’s about to be disappointed on both counts. He encounters Melior the artist. Melior specializes in stucco, but now he’s the one who’s stuck-oh!

RECEIVED

NOV 20 2006

Visiting a Roman Villa

TMA LIBRARY

The Roman Empire was run by a talented, rich, and competitive ruling elite—the families of the 300 to 600 men who belonged to the senatorial class and the perhaps 10,000 men of the equestrian (or business) class. Most of these families owned several homes: townhouses in Rome, farms and houses throughout Italy, and the ultimate prestige house—a luxury villa with a view of the Bay of Naples. Villas were both leisure homes for families (made up of all of the inhabitants of the house, including slaves) and stages for public life, where elite men and women conducted business.

Access to rooms in the villa was dictated by the status of the visitor and his or her relationship to the resident family. The most public room was the atrium (the central hall), where all visitors were admitted. From there, rooms became progressively more intimate, from the *tablinum* (library) to the *triclinium* (dining room) and the most private, the *cubicula* (bedrooms).

We invite you to feel at home as you visit *In Stabiano: Exploring the Ancient Seaside Villas of the Roman Elite*. See how art was used to impress visitors to these magnificent villas and experience a taste of the daily life of the rich and famous of ancient Rome.



In Stabiano: Exploring the Ancient Seaside Villas of the Roman Elite is organized by the Restoring Ancient Stabiae (RAS) Foundation and the Superintendency of Archaeology of Pompeii (SAP), tour managed by International Arts & Artists, Washington, D.C., and partially sponsored by the National Italian American Foundation (NIAF), Grand Circle Foundation, and the Italian Cultural Institute

2006